

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:38 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Department of Justice. In his remarks, he referred to Myrlie Evers-Williams, chair, board of directors, NAACP; Roger Wilkins, author and professor, George Mason University; Jaimie Smith, student, Baltimore School of the Arts; Jason Hines, student, Morgan State University; Ayinde Jean-Baptiste, student, Whitney Young Magnet High School; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; Coretta Scott King, widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dexter King, his son; and former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp.

Statement on the Balkan Peace Process

February 20, 1996

This afternoon I met with my senior national security team to review the situation in Bosnia. I received a report on this weekend's meeting in Rome with the Presidents of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia.

I am pleased that in Rome, the Balkan leaders recommitted themselves to keeping peace on track. The parties pledged to resume contacts with the NATO-led Implementation Force, to reunify Sarajevo on schedule, to release all remaining war prisoners, to remove any remaining foreign forces, to cooperate in the investigation and prosecution of war crimes, and to strengthen the Bosnian-Croat Federation and reunify Mostar.

I have instructed my foreign policy team to continue efforts to convince all the parties that their Rome commitments must be implemented faithfully and without delay. The road to peace is a hard road, but it is the right road. We are proud to be part of the NATO force, and I am pleased to be meeting with NATO Secretary General Solana today.

While serious problems remain, it is important to keep the situation in Bosnia in perspective. After nearly 4 years of war, peace will not take hold overnight. We should not lose sight of the remarkable progress that has been made since Dayton. The cease-fire is holding. The zones of separation are in place. And in Sarajevo, once a dying city haunted by snipers and shells, the markets are filled. People are back on the streets. Builders are repairing shops and small businesses in the

center of town. Sarajevo has come back to life, with a future for all of its people.

These are the kinds of tangible benefits that will help give all the people of Bosnia a greater stake in peace than in war. Tomorrow, I am sending to Capitol Hill a supplemental appropriations request for \$820 million to support IFOR and its mission. This includes \$200 million to assist the essential process of civilian implementation—specifically, economic reconstruction and reform, deployment of international police monitors, and demining. I will work with Congress to secure these funds as quickly as possible. The sooner the Bosnian people recover the blessings of a normal life, the surer the chances for a peace that endures.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the enormous dedication of Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, who has spearheaded the peace effort for us since last August. As Ambassador Holbrooke steps down, I want to thank him for his service to our Nation. The people of Bosnia and American people owe him a tremendous debt of gratitude. My new Special Adviser for Implementation of the Dayton accords, Ambassador Robert Gallucci, one of our most experienced and successful diplomats, joined our meeting today and will continue our mission of moving the peace process forward.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Convention on the Law of the Sea Fisheries Agreement

February 20, 1996

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, with Annexes ("the Agreement"), which was adopted at United Nations Headquarters in New York by consensus of the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish

Stocks on August 4, 1995, and signed by the United States on December 4, 1995. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Agreement.

The Agreement represents a considerable achievement for the United States in promoting better stewardship of living marine resources. It strikes a sound balance between the interests of coastal States in protecting offshore fishery resources and those of States whose fishing vessels operate on the high seas. If widely ratified and properly implemented, the Agreement should significantly improve the prospects for sustainable fisheries worldwide.

The Agreement builds directly upon, and strengthens, the fishery provisions contained in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ("the Convention"), which I transmitted to the Senate for advice and consent on October 6, 1994. As such, the Agreement further reflects the central role of the Convention in governing the maritime relations of the international community.

Perhaps more than any other nation, the United States stands to benefit from widespread adherence to this Agreement. The Agreement will help to ensure that the harvesting of fish by vessels of other nations in waters beyond our exclusive economic zone does not undermine our domestic management of fisheries within U.S. jurisdiction. In addition, by promoting sound conservation practices generally, the Agreement can restore and maintain productive ocean fisheries for the benefit of American consumers and for U.S. fishing vessels wherever they operate.

With regard to disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the Agreement, I intend to choose a special arbitral tribunal constituted in accordance with Annex VIII of the Convention, as recommended in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Agree-

ment and give its advice and consent to its ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 20, 1996.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the Report of the
National Endowment for Democracy**
February 20, 1996

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the provisions of section 504(h) of Public Law 98-164, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4413(i)), I transmit herewith the 12th Annual Report of the National Endowment for Democracy, which covers fiscal year 1995.

As the report demonstrates, the National Endowment for Democracy remains at the forefront of our efforts to expand and consolidate democratic gains around the globe. The strong bipartisan support the Endowment continues to receive reflects our Nation's steadfast commitment to the promotion of democracy.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 20, 1996.

**Exchange With Reporters Prior to
Discussions With President Leonid
Kuchma of Ukraine**
February 21, 1996

1996 Election

Q. Pat Buchanan said today congressional Republicans shouldn't cut Medicare and veterans' benefits. Do you agree?

President Clinton. Good for him.

Q. What's your reaction to what happened last night? There seems to be a split in the Republican Party.

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I'm very gratified by what happened in the Democratic primary last night. I haven't seen the final numbers, but we may have made history there, even for an incumbent Presi-